

REMARKS

Prior to this Reply, Claims 1-34 were pending. Through this Reply, Claims 1, 9-12, and 15-22 have been amended, while Claims 35-39 have been added. Furthermore, Claims 4-8, 23, 24, and 27-34 have been cancelled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter contained therein. Accordingly, Claims 1-3, 9-22, 25, 26 and 35-39 are now at issue in the present case.

I. Claim Rejections

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-7, 12, 14-17, 21-26, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,249,393 to Billings et al. (hereinafter “Billings”). In addition, the Examiner rejected Claims 30 and 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,909,330 to Carlson et al. (hereinafter “Carlson”). Furthermore, the Examiner rejected Claims 8-11, 18-20 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Billings in view of Carlson. Finally, the Examiner rejected Claims 13 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Billings and Carlson, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,266,199 to Gillis et al. (hereinafter “Gillis”).

In response, Applicants have amended certain claims. Applicants believe that the pending claims are patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

For example, with respect to Claim 1 (and the claims that depend therefrom), Applicants believe that the cited references fail to disclose the steps of: “providing a disk surface having a track, said track including a plurality of AGC fields each corresponding with at least one data sector in said track; measuring an amplitude associated with each of said plurality of AGC fields, said amplitudes corresponding to flying heights of a transducer head over the disk surface at

locations corresponding to said plurality of AGC fields; storing values corresponding with said measured amplitudes onto said disk surface; prior to writing data to a data sector in said track, measuring an amplitude associated with the AGC field that corresponds with said data sector and comparing said measured amplitude to a stored value corresponding to the AGC field.”

With respect to Claim 15 (and the claims that depend therefrom), Applicants believe that the cited references fail to disclose: “[a] method for detecting whether a flying height of a transducer head over a disk surface in a disk drive exceeds a desired amount, said disk surface having a track, said track including a plurality of AGC fields each corresponding with at least one data sector in said track, said method comprising the steps of: determining standard transducer head flying height numbers, wherein said standard transducer head flying height numbers are based on measured amplitudes associated with each of said plurality of AGC fields; storing said standard transducer head flying height numbers on said disk surface; prior to writing data to a data sector in said track, determining an amplitude associated with the AGC field associated with said data sector to obtain an observed transducer head flying height number; comparing said selected standard transducer head flying height number associated with said AGC field to said observed transducer head flying height number.”

With respect to Claim 38, Applicants believe the cited references fail to disclose the steps of: “providing a disk surface having a track, said track including a plurality of groups of servo bursts each corresponding with at least one data sector in said track; measuring an amplitude associated with each of said plurality of groups of servo bursts, said amplitudes corresponding to flying heights of a transducer head over the disk surface at locations corresponding to said plurality of groups of servo bursts; storing values corresponding with said measured amplitudes onto said disk surface; and prior to writing data to a data sector in said track, measuring an

amplitude associated with the group of servo bursts that correspond with said data sector and comparing said measured amplitude to a stored value corresponding to the group of servo bursts.”

With respect to Claim 39, Applicants believe that the cited references fail to disclose the steps of: “providing a disk surface having a track, said track including a plurality of ERC fields each corresponding with at least one data sector in said track; measuring an amplitude associated with each of said plurality of ERC fields, said amplitudes corresponding to flying heights of a transducer head over the disk surface at locations corresponding to said plurality of ERC fields; storing values corresponding with said measured amplitudes onto said disk surface; and prior to writing data to a data sector in said track, measuring an amplitude associated with the ERC field that corresponds with said data sector and comparing said measured amplitude to a stored value corresponding to the ERC field.”

II. Additional Claim Fees

In determining whether additional claim fees are due, reference is made to the Fee Calculation Table (below).

| Fee Calculation Table | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------------------|----------|----------------|
| | Claims Remaining After Amendment | | Highest Number Previously Paid For | Present Extra | Rate | Additional Fee |
| Total (37 CFR 1.16(c)) | 24 | Minus | 34 | = 0 | x \$18 = | \$ 0.00 |
| Independent (37 CFR 1.16(b)) | 4 | Minus | 3 | = 1 | x \$88 = | \$ 88.00 |

As set forth in the Fee Calculation Table (above), Applicants previously paid claim fees for thirty-four (34) total claims and for three (3) independent claims. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2198 in the amount of \$88.00 for the presentation of one (1) independent claim in excess of three (3).

Applicants believe that no other fees are due. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2198 for any fee deficiencies associated with filing this paper.

III. Conclusion

Applicants believe that the application appears to be in form for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number regarding any matters relating to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



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